



# NEWSLETTER

The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation invites you to an  
"Informal Evening with Reynold Lowe of Materials Unlimited"  
at

2 West Michigan Avenue - Tuesday, January 25 - 7:30 pm

Join us for our usual bimonthly meeting - in a most unusual setting - the former Moose Lodge overlooking the Huron River, at the west end of the Michigan Avenue bridge. The lights will gleam and the stained glass will glow as Reynold Lowe talks informally about the history and nature of his nationally-known restoration workshops and showrooms here in the heart of Ypsilanti. To meet there of an evening with others like yourself who care about beautiful things out of the past should be an especial treat. Mr. Lowe will show slides and illustrate first hand some of his processes of refinishing and restoration. With three floors to explore, an almost infinite number of antiques and salvaged objects to examine, the evening will be all too short. Refreshments will, as usual, be served!

Bring a friend and join us!!

## SPECIAL FEATURE

### THE CANDIDATES SPEAK OUT ON PRESERVATION

The Heritage Foundation is not a political action group. Expect no official endorsement of candidates in the present race for mayor of Ypsilanti. The Foundation is an educational group dedicated to the field of historic preservation insofar as it will best promote and enhance the general welfare of the citizens of Ypsilanti, and in the interest of public education, the Foundation has invited all of the mayoral candidates to express themselves on the subject: "The Future of Historic Preservation in Ypsilanti".

**Councilmember**  
**NATHALIE EDMUNDS**

Growing widespread acceptance of historic preservation in Ypsilanti makes me optimistic for the future. It is here to stay! Although problems exist, they are minor compared to the past and can be helped by educating property owners that renovation is economically feasible within the parameters of historic preservation. As I look back on my own efforts during the last twenty seven years, it is gratifying to see the results of preservation and to see former opponents of preservation become aggressive advocates.

My first experience with restoration was in 1956 when my husband

**Councilmember**  
**CHARLES KETTLES**

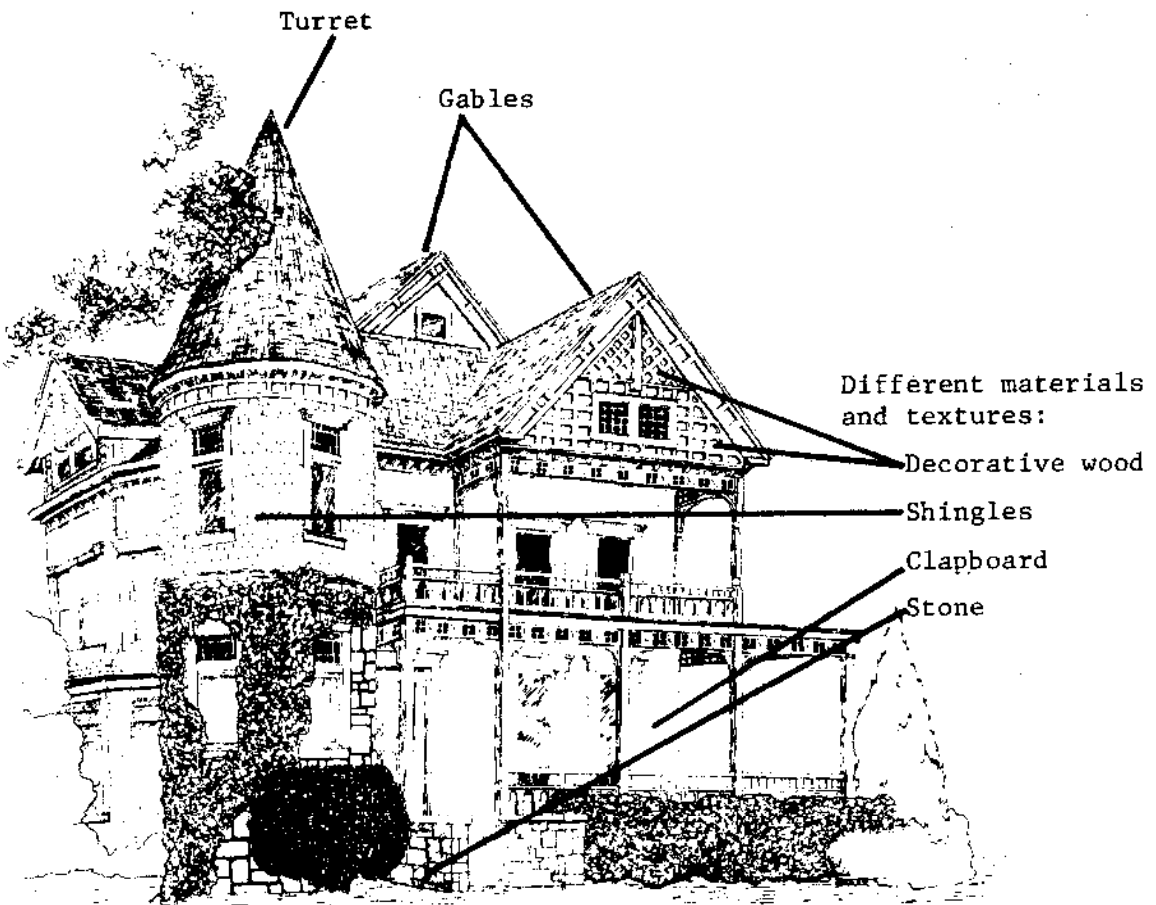
My personal interest in historic preservation of significant structures within the community evolved from my respect for history and direct association with the community. My grandfather moved to Ypsilanti from London, Ontario in October 1916. Three generations remain in this City today. I was born here in 1930. Further, P.R. Cleary, founder of Cleary College and my wife's grandfather, moved to this community in 1882, at the age of 24. Three generations remain in this City today. My own interest in this subject is not necessarily shared by all of the community currently within the geographic boundaries of the

**Mayor**  
**PETE MURDOCK**

Preservation is an important element of a community's growth and development. It is particularly valuable in older communities such as Ypsilanti to provide a strategy or partial strategy for the revitalization of deteriorating neighborhoods and failing commercial areas. Preservation can lead to a stabilization and improvement of property values and the strengthening of the City's tax base. It can provide the impetus for a rebirth of commercial activity such as has happened in Depot Town. Preservation and the activities associated with it lead to a renewed sense of community pride and an increased community involvement.



The following is the fifth of five descriptions of architectural styles commonly found in Ypsilanti. They are from a primer of historic architecture developed by Jerry Fouchey and Jane Bird for the Ypsilanti Public Schools Local History Project.



#### QUEEN ANNE - 1875-1900

Typical features: Large variety of forms, textures, materials and colors  
 Great collection of gables, dormers, shingles, turrets, chimneys, windows and porches  
 Asymmetrical (unbalanced) design

This very fancy style can best be recognized by the tremendous variety of everything! The Queen Anne style of architecture uses a variety of gables, dormers, chimneys, turrets, windows, bays and porches built of many different materials and textures, all in an unbalanced (asymmetrical) arrangement. Chimney bricks are laid in beautiful patterns. Smooth boards, clapboards and several different kinds of shingles were all used on the same building. No two turrets, chimneys, dormers or porches were ever alike!



#### COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED TO EXPLORE FUTURE OF WELCH HALL

Since our Foundation meeting in November, when we discussed the future of Welch Hall, Professor Andrew Nazarro, Director of the Historic Preservation Program at Eastern, met with Eastern's Board of Regents to discuss the matter. He was accompanied by numerous students and a few faculty and interest citizens. The most enthusiastic interest in the subject came from Regents Dolores Kinzel and Beth Milford. It was Kinzel's proposal to establish a committee to explore the alternatives to demolition. Prof. Nazarro agreed to meet with Vice President Romkema to select the committee. On Monday, January 10 they decided that the committee would consist of two students, two faculty members (including Nazarro), Romkema (from the administration), a University lawyer, and Nancie Loppnow, a member of the community - who, incidentally, attended our last meeting. An article on Welch appeared in the Jan. 10 issue of The Echo, the main thrust of which was the opposing points of view held by Nazarro and Romkema. Romkema believes that those who want Welch preserved are misled by their own sentimentality. Let's hope that the committee can show that this is a much more serious issue, that something of great value to the University and the community is at stake, and that preserving a building built of the finest materials of its time (1896) is worth the investment of a fraction of the money that the University is pouring into much newer structures.



OS, con't.

I restored a 19th century aspect St. home to serve as his office. Over the next few years we moved the Octagon House (slated for demolition) to River St., where we also acquired two other threatened homes. My interest in preservation intensified during the 1960's and 1970's when I initiated six separate campaigns to save the old Library and other Huron St. structures from being torn down for new construction. It is difficult to believe today that in 1970 the City administration proposed to demolish Depot Town and River St. for industrial development, also proposed leveling the old Fire Station. I became a City Council member in 1970 and with the help of a few concerned citizens was able to defeat these proposals. After this I sought National Register historic district designation for the area. The process took eight years. It took two years to convince Council to appoint a local historic district study committee. In 1973, Council designated the boundaries of the local district but it took five more years of hard work before Council finally passed the ordinance in 1978. There are many aspects of preservation I am unable to mention in detail due to space limitations. These include a number of projects I spearheaded in the 1970's - an ad hoc group (forerunner of the Heritage Foundation) that defeated a demolition project for homes on the west side of Huron St., facilities for Artrain I; the securing of a grant from America the Beautiful to fund a U. of M. architectural graduate student to develop a Depot Town renovation plan (his concept of a farmers market & his comprehensive design provided the basis for development of the present plan); and the founding of the Ypsilanti Yesteryear Heritage Festival, which has done much to educate the entire community as to the benefits of preservation. The local historic district ordinance is not mandated by Federal or State law or by City Charter. It could be abolished in two meetings of Council or by citizen initiative or it could be amended and become meaningless.

KETTLES, con't.

Historic District. In keeping with the democratic form of government, I believe that it appropriate to identify and recognize the majority interest of those within the District as well as the rights of the remaining part of the community outside of the District. If those who reside outside of the Historic District feel strongly toward implementing the associated ordinance, then with that comes an obligation to support those directly affected within the the District. In the case of the business community, support includes patronizing them whenever possible. In turn, the merchants must be competitive & reflect a favorable attitude toward the community & the people they serve. To put the horse before the cart; we as a community must orient our purchase of goods and services toward the downtown merchants if in fact we wish to have a business area which represents a quality more in keeping with the image of our heritage which we choose to hold. In summary, this

MURDOCK, con't.

Despite the fact that Ypsilanti has been in the midst of a severe economic depression, preservation has led to or has been a part of many significant activities in our community. One only has to look to my neighborhood, the City's near East Side, to see the physical and economic turn-around of the Depot Town and adjacent residential area. The community pride that has developed through organizations such as the Depot Town Association, the Historic East Side Association, and the Near South Side Neighborhood Organization has encompassed preservation as a major component. The North Huron Street corridor and the Huron Hotel are other developments that utilized preservation in their rebirth. The Heritage Festival, the City's most successful tourist attraction, is of course centered around the concepts of preservation. Right now preservation in Ypsilanti is facing its severest test. The controversy surrounding the National Bank of Ypsilanti project has acted as a catalyst for opponents of preservation to rally around. As you know, the City Council has established a committee to review the Historic District Ordinance, its administration & impact on the City. The committee's report is due on February 7 and will make known its findings and any recommendations relative to the Ordinance and its administration. I do not wish to pre-empt the Committee's report but let it suffice to say that the re-



less.

Diplomacy is essential in promoting historic preservation within the total framework of our community. At the suggestion of Tom Lutz of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, I have asked Council to place a one year moratorium on Commission review of downtown building permit applications. This move will provide an opportunity for less pressured consideration of revitalization alternatives and will allow time to develop an approach to downtown redevelopment within the framework of preservation.

"Ypsilanti Alive" is a new program of the Central Business Community and the purpose is to revitalize downtown. Liz Knibbe and I serve on the steering committee. Volunteers (and eventually a full time consultant) will provide merchants with plans and ideas for renovation based on the National Trust Main St. program.

I believe that Ypsilanti economic goals and preservation goals may be achieved through creative approach and cooperation. I believed this when I first joined Council 12 years ago and I believe now that as Mayor, I can better help achieve these goals.

In summary, this means that the interest of the majority must be identified for the community in its entirety. Separate from that, the interest of the majority representative of the two elements, business & residential, within the District must be identified. With that information, the method whereby we can satisfy those interests would be clear. A price must also be recognized for the accomplishment of those goals. There is not a simple one answer to the broad & complex question concerning historic preservation for the City.

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suffice to say that the recommendations probably will be aimed at improving the administration of the Ordinance. As to the question at hand - The Future of Preservation in Ypsilanti - the answer is the future lies in those who make it. It is up to us as a community to determine what this future of preservation will be. Community groups such as the Heritage Foundation, are key to ensuring the public understanding and support of preservation. The public policy that develops toward preservation is directly correlated to the level of public support. I look forward to participating in the effort to ensure that there is a future for preservation in Ypsilanti.



SCHOLARSHIP SOON TO BE  
ESTABLISHED

The Foundation Board of Directors has unanimously passed upon the proposal & procedure for a Preservation Scholarship Fund to be set up for a deserving EMU Preservation Program student committed to the Ypsilanti community. Prof. Nazarro is in the process of working out the details with the University for administering the fund.

HERITAGE FESTIVAL PLANS ARE  
UNDERWAY

Nat Edmunds reports that some committees are already at work and others are being set up to deal with the multitude of activities for the '83 Festival. Anyone interested in serving in some capacity to make this event another success - call the Chamber of Commerce, 482-4920.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

This Newsletter welcomes your views and opinions. Send your letters to:

Editor Jack Harris  
510 Pearl  
Ypsilanti, Mi. 48197

DUES are always due !!

HELP !!!

The Foundation desperately needs more people to work on its various committees - especially HOME TOUR !!! If you are interested, call Jack Harris at 485-2155. (Please don't complain about what's done or not done unless you're willing to get out and DO IT !

1983 CALENDARS

More handsome than ever -  
Available now -  
\$3

SAD NEWS

Foundation member David McGaffin died earlier this month. We extend our most heartfelt sympathies to his wife, Ethel, and family.

WELCOME, NEW MEMBER !

Martha Galley Anderson  
651 Kalamazoo St.  
South Haven, Mi. 49090

Her friendly letter stated that her family lived in Ypsilanti from 1920 to 1938, and that she, her sister, and all her brothers graduated from high school here and from EMU.





MARCH 1983

# NEWSLETTER

**NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday, March 22, 1983 - 7:30 p.m.  
**PLACE:** The Hutchinson House (High/Scope)  
at the corner of  
North River and East Forest  
**PROGRAM:** "Rural Housing in Washtenaw County and its  
Cultural Roots"  
**SPEAKER:** Dr. Marshall S. McLennan  
President, Washtenaw County Historic  
District Commission  
Co-Director, Historic Preservation  
Program, Eastern Michigan  
University

Have you ever spent an afternoon on a spring, summer or autumn day driving up and down the country roads of Washtenaw County making discoveries (remember when gas was 35¢ a gallon?). For those who haven't, there are unimaginably beautiful and interesting sights, and above all, variety - exciting old houses in every lane - clapboard, brick, stone - especially cobblestone, and even log. Some of us had these pleasures in those years when transportation was cheaper - now we are offered an evening of slides, making those discoveries again.

Dr. McLennan's program is based upon a study made by EMU during 1981-82, funded by the Michigan History Division's Historical Preservation Fund. It explores the architectural styles found in rural Washtenaw County and traces their roots in older parts of the country.

Come along as we travel with Dr. McLennan down nearby roads and lanes and discover our roots! If you're having an identity crisis, this should help - even if you're not, the evening should be a delight!

Sandra Knight, our Refreshment Chairperson, has promised the usual outlay of goodies. And for those who still haven't spent an evening in the elegance of the Hutchinson mansion - one of Ypsilanti's finest - this is your opportunity.

## DOWNTOWN TO BE REMOVED FROM HISTORIC DISTRICT ?

Those of you who do not receive any local paper should be informed that, on March 7, the Ypsilanti City Council, by a vote of 8-3, instructed the City administration to prepare a resolution to separate the downtown commercial area from the Historic District. The motion was introduced by Councilmember Albert Robinson and was supported by Councilmember Nathalie Edmunds. Voting to remove downtown were David Kircher, Jerry Curtis, Dan Studer, Eula Booker Tate, Charles Kettles, and Faz Husaein. Supporting the retention of downtown in the Historic District were Tom Dodd, Carolyn McKeever, and Mayor Pete Murdock.

Council will act on this resolution in the very near future (exact date uncertain). Any opinions you may wish to communicate to the newspapers or to City Council should be forwarded immediately !



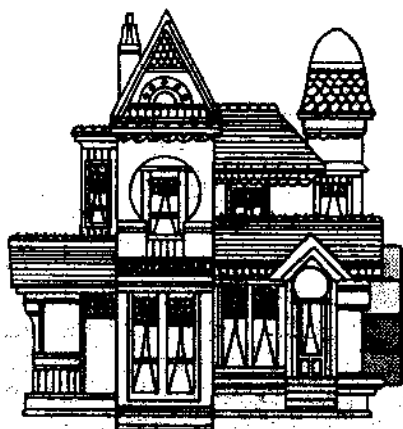
### MARIGOLD SALE CHAIRMEN MAKE PLANS

Dick Warner and Bill Fennel, Co-Chairs of the 4th Annual Marigold Sale, sponsored by the Foundation, have set the date for the sale: Saturday, May 7, the day before Mother's Day. Plants will include marigolds, petunias, and impatiens. These will be top quality plants and prices will be competitive. Support the Foundation and beautify Ypsilanti! Remind your neighbors to put the date on their calendars. We hope to have the sale again on the green on the north side of Old Town Hall, corner of N. Huron and Cross. Work volunteers call Dick, 482-8217 or Bill 482-1071. **DON'T FORGET THE DATE - Sat. May 7 !!**



### SABBATICAL LEAVE FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

One of only nine one-semester leaves granted by Eastern Michigan University for next year went to Dr. Jack Harris, Department of English Language and Literature, who will establish an educational program for the Towner House Children's Museum in Ypsilanti. Working with the Co-Director of the Museum, Judy White, Harris hopes to develop a program which uses the rich human resources of the University to help the Public Schools with their well-established Community History Project. The Museum Board hopes to make the Towner House an important center for developing in the young a sense of place and a pride in their own community.



### HOME TOUR PLANS UNDERWAY

Planning for the 1983 Annual Historic Homes Tour, sponsored by the Foundation, got underway last month. Members of the committee are Jack Harris, Jane Bird, and Bill Nickels. Chief guides are already committed & buildings are being selected. An exciting and varied list of homes should make this another highly successful and important contribution to the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival. Watch for details in the May NEWSLETTER. If you wish to serve on this important event, please call: Jack 485-2155, Jane 482-8989, Bill 483-8896



HELP ME REGAIN MY DIGNITY !!

Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Stamos, owners of the Gothic Revival Samson House at 302 West Cross (corner of North Adams and Cross) are planning the rehabilitation of this historic structure, one of the most impressive buildings in town. Neglected and abused by previous owners and altered over the years, the house apparently is finally going to receive the attention it so much deserves. The Stamoses are particularly interested in information about the history of the building and what it looked like originally, particularly the front. Do any of our senior citizens recall being in the house years ago or remember what it looked like then? Does anyone have photos? If so, call the Stamoses at (313) 483-5695 or write to them at P.O. Box 11, Ypsilanti, Mi. 48197.

COMING ATTRACTION !!!

The 2nd Annual Buffet Pot Luck Supper will be held this year on Tuesday, May 24, at 6:00 p.m., at the Ladies Literary Club, 218 N. Washington.

The event of the evening will be the Annual Presentation of Historic Structure Markers. The owners of marker buildings will be our very special guests.

Anyone (member or non-member) wishing to attend, please call Sandy Knight, 483-5749 or Christine Blinn, 483-3512.



"THANKS, AND EVER THANKS AND OFT GOOD TURNS ARE SHUFFLED OFF  
WITH SUCH INCONSTANT PAY" (William Shakespeare)

THANKS - to all those citizens who prepared the splendid Feb. 17 defense of the Historic District Ordinance, Commission, and the need to keep the downtown within the Historic District. While the majority of City Council totally ignored this show of support, it was a remarkable demonstration of intelligent and articulate argument for preservation by those who are committed to a better Ypsilanti.

THANKS - to the majority members of the Ad Hoc Review Committee (set up by City Council) for its tremendously impressive and thorough study of the background, administration, and impact of the Ypsilanti Historic District Ordinance as well as proposed remedies, findings, and recommendations. Disregarded by the majority of City Council, this study will nevertheless stand as an important historical document in the history of Ypsilanti. It will also, no doubt, become an important study tool for historic districts state and nationwide. Thanks: Pete Murdock, Denis Schmiedeke, Jane Bird, Hank Prebys and John Van Bolt for your hard work.

THANKS - to the Durant brothers, Bill and Tom, of Durant's Flowers & Durant Construction respectively, for their valiant stance on maintaining mandatory design standards in the downtown. They may have been overruled for the present, but their integrity and commitment to Ypsilanti is evident. Foundation members might want to thank Tom for allowing us to use his handsomely restored Ladies Library during Festival, for serving as speaker at our public meeting just one year ago this month, and for his recent letters of support for the H.D. Ordinance. Members might want to thank Bill for his time-consuming efforts in finding out what actually goes on at H.D. Commission meetings, for his work on the joint committee formed between the CBC and HDC, for his commitment to a plan to improve the appearance of the planters downtown, and for his letters to the press.

THANKS - to City Manager Van Whaler for his first year of service and for his independence, good judgment, and determination to "speak what he feels, not what he ought to say". Stick with us, Van, no other city needs you more.

THANKS - to retiring City Councilmember Tom Dodd, for his delightful cartoon booklet entitled, An Architectural History of Random Falls, which is so cleverly and beautifully drawn that it should receive national attention. Have you sent a copy to the National Trust, Tom? They would love it in Washington, where preservation has come of age. Your device of gentle satire may fall on deaf ears here, but the historic preservation movement is so civilized and its power so established elsewhere, that the effect of your little essay will some day even here be felt, "to help people laugh themselves out of their follies".

THANKS - to Bill Vollano, Director of Child and Family Service, for his persistent determination over the past several years to restore the crumbling Glover House at 118 South Washington. Now, with a generous grant from the State of Michigan, and hours, days and weeks of effort from Bill and his volunteers, the house is once again one of Ypsilanti's treasures. An award is waiting somewhere for you, Bill, and is already there in the hearts of those who genuinely care about this old town.

THANKS - to Preservation Eastern (EMU) for its brand-new newsletter and its support for the preservation of Welch Hall (note the clever logo - the interesting roof line of Welch). For your copy of this most recent preservation-oriented paper, call 487-0218.



## WHAT IS DESIGN REVIEW ?

Since we're all quoting the MICHIGAN DESIGN QUARTERLY (see Depot Town Rag, March 1983), some Foundation readers might like to have a few quotes from the latest issue (Winter 82/83). In an interview with Ronald Lee Fleming, President of Townscape Institute in Cambridge, Mass., MDQ asks the question: "What is design review?" The response, in part --

"Design review is the right of governing bodies to require certain standards of behavior in the visual environment. It usually involves an ordinance, a body of people on a planning, art, or zoning commission, and it requires some kind of written environmental standards. It thus necessitates that judgments be made about the quality of the design which architects and builders and contractors and their clients wish to create in a place ... today design review is an authority exercised by a government through a board of citizens, sometimes assisted by professional consultants, and often assisted by the staff of the city. The first dominant type of design review was concerned with maintaining the historic character of a place. But now the concept embraces many new communities which are interested in defining a character where perhaps none existed before ...

Most of these boards consist of five to eight people, usually including someone in real estate, a lawyer, sometimes an architect, a graphic designer or somebody with design training, sometimes a community historian, who all sit and review a proposal made by the architect or his client. [New buildings can and often do] have contemporary looking architecture that still respects the criteria regarding the relationship of window space to wall area, roof lines, types of material, scale of the building, and so forth. ... But unfortunately, many architects have not grown up in an era in which the idea of working within a context is seen as a creative process ...

I think it is important to have people with design background. It is important to have people who have some sense of community history. And that doesn't necessarily mean long periods in the past, but just a sense of the associations of a place ...

The idea is to use the different elements of space and time -- such as elements of community history -- as a way of reinforcing, enriching, and revealing the power of the places in which we live."





MAY 1983

# NEWSLETTER

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, May 24, 1983 - 6:30 p.m.  
PLACE: LADIES' LITERARY CLUB, 218 North Washington  
SPECIAL EVENT: 2nd Annual Awards Banquet - Pot Luck Style  
PROGRAM: Historic Structure Marker Awards

Many of you will remember the pleasures of last May's Marker Awards Meeting - a pot luck banquet superbly organized by our program chairperson, Christine Blinn. An automatic slide show of historic properties was there for those interested (as many were!); the marker presentations made to our special guests, the marker recipients; and the luscious outlay of food in the long dining room to be gathered by the plateful and carried into the elegant front parlor - these were the basic ingredients of last year's May meeting. Again, May has arrived, with grass greener than ever and flowers everywhere, and our new refreshment chairperson, Sandy Knight, has been planning another evening in Ypsilanti's most lovely landmark. How could you miss it?

The membership list will be used to call and arrange for a variety of dishes. If for any reason you have not been called - **WHETHER YOU ARE A MEMBER OR NOT** - and you wish to attend this special historic event, simply give Sandy a call at 483-5749.

Remember, dinner at 6:30 - no business meeting, no speaker, just a social gathering where everyone can exchange views about what's happening in our town. Join us!

Marker recipients are NOT, of course, expected to bring a dish, since they are our guests!



The owners of the following buildings will be awarded  
Historic Structure Markers and will be our very special  
GUESTS OF HONOR:

Dr. and Mrs. William Edmunds	The Octagon House, 114 North River
High/Scope Foundation	209 Oak
Howard and LuAnn Booth	7 North Normal
The Child and Family Service	118 South Washington
Mrs. Ethel Roper	410 South Huron
Mr. Richard Wartley	Carriage house, 213 North Adams
St. John Catholic Church	410 West Cross



### ANNUAL HISTORIC HOME TOUR:

East Side, South Side, West Side - all will be represented on this year's Heritage Foundation Historic Home Tour. This is not, like so many others, a decorator's tour. This is a chance not only to get a good view of Ypsilanti's architectural history but a rare opportunity to get inside four beautiful private residences and one glorious mansion turned social agency. Variety and individuality will again be the keynote features of the tour. In some cases you may still be able to glimpse restoration in progress; but in all instances you will undoubtedly go away with a very positive, up-beat impression of Ypsilanti. While you will need transportation between the east and west sides of town, you will most certainly want to walk the short distance between the houses in each neighborhood.

With pleasure and pride, then, we announce this year's Homes:

Scott Kunst & Jane Raymond - 318 North Park (19th Century  
workingman's cottage)

Hank Prebys & Joe Mattimoe - 301 North Grove (Gothic Revival)

Howard and LuAnn Booth - 7 North Normal (Greek Revival,  
French influence)

The Child & Family Service - 118 South Washington (Queen Anne  
Glover mansion)

Marty McMillan - 35 South Summit (Queen Anne, with  
earlier Gothic features)

DATE: Sunday, August 28

TIME: Noon to 5:00 p.m.

PRICE: \$3.00 Adults  
\$1.50 Children under 12  
\$2.00 Senior Citizens

Guides are needed - volunteers,  
please call Jack Harris, 485-2155  
Jane Bird, 482-8989  
Bill Nickels, 483-8896





TOWNER HOUSE MUSEUM - Progress Report:

Last year at this time and in this same space it was reported that a 30-day extension on the proposed demolition of this historic structure had been granted. A proposal for a children's museum to be based in the threatened structure had been made and a time schedule for repair and restoration was being worked out. Thus far, the Friends of the Towner House Museum have been able to meet those deadlines. But FUNDING IS URGENT! Anyone caring enough about this worthy project to make a contribution should send check or money order to: Judy White, Chairperson

Friends of Towner House Museum  
210 West Cross  
Ypsilanti, Mi. 48197

Groups and organizations are also urged to contribute. The money is needed now! The furnace needs repair and exterior painting is planned.

Jack Harris reports that he has applied for a grant from the Michigan Council for the Humanities to do a series of public programs designed to gather together humanists, museum members, parents, teachers, and interested citizens to discuss the value and uses of an historical children's museum. The proposed four-part program would extend from September through December, 1983, the time period of Dr. Harris' sabbatical leave from Eastern Michigan University. Notification of award is due July 1st.

ANYONE INTERESTED IN SERVING AS A WEEKEND VOLUNTEER at the Towner House Museum should call Jack Harris at 485-2155.



### Ypsilanti HERITAGE FESTIVAL:

Nat Edmunds, Co-Chair of this annual event, reports that plans are well underway and that this year's Festival should be bigger and better than ever! If you wish to volunteer your services to any of the multitude of projects which make up the Festival program, call the Visitor & Convention Bureau, 482-4920, NOW!

Here are only some of the dozens of exciting Festival events:

CIRCUS! HISTORIC HOME TOUR!  
Pioneer Village at Towner House!  
Stage Entertainment!  
MARBLES TOURNAMENT! PARADE!  
Softball Tournament! Food!  
NEW PIONEER AND CIVIL WAR ENCAMPMENTS!  
ARTS & CRAFTS!  
Riverboat Gambling Tent!

And that's only a sample of the fun!

### DOWNTOWN WINDOW DISPLAY:

Lis Knibbe (483-6653) is asking for pictures of old Ypsilanti, especially of downtown, for the storefront window which the Foundation has adopted, in the building adjacent to the Library fountain. Lis reports that the current display has received appreciative comments from downtown business people. Ideas for new displays are welcome, and worker volunteers appreciated!



### DEPOT RENOVATION "GO" !!!!

Sue Remien Fejes, Community Development Director, has announced that plans for the renovation of the crumbling train station in Depot Town are now "Go" after receiving word that an Urban Development Action Grant from the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development in the amount of \$145,000 had been approved!

Designs for a first class restaurant have been on the drawing board for over a year now, and this appears to be the turning point in making this Depot Town dream a reality!

### Bird on PARKER MILL BOARD:

Jane Bird, past YHF pres., was named to the Board of Directors of the newly formed Friends of Parker Mill (Geddes Road), a group which will work closely with the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission to restore the mill to working condition and to develop the surrounding area for park use. An exciting new project - watch area newspapers for progress reports!



#### YPSILANTIANS ATTEND LOCAL HISTORY CONFERENCE:

A number of Ypsilantians, including Mary Liskow, Drew Nazzaro (with a contingent of his Preservation Eastern students), John Van Bolt, Jack Harris, Denis Schmiedeke, Lis Knibbe, and Jane Bird attended the 25th Annual Conference on Local History, April 15-16, at Wayne State University in Detroit. Major figures at the national and state levels of preservation participated. A special session on Saturday led to a lively and informative discussion of the problems currently besetting Historic District Commissions here in Michigan, including Ypsilanti.

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#### MICHIGAN HISTORIC DISTRICT NETWORK:

Ypsilanti will not only be represented at the next annual meeting of the Michigan Historic District Network in Lansing on June 15, it will be the featured city on the program. Discussion will center on the problems facing historic districts today and how Ypsilanti is weathering its particular turmoil. An exchange of ideas will no doubt be beneficial to all those interested in the advantages of maintaining an historic district. By sharing problems and solutions, districts can better meet their specific difficulties. Ypsilanti will also be heard from in the upcoming issue of the Network Newsletter.



## YPSILANTI MAKING HEADLINES !!

Ypsilanti is making news more and more these days - some good, some bad, all of it pretty interesting:

- Mar. 24, Detroit Free Press (Wayne-Western Washtenaw edition) - article discussing HDC's denial of NBY proposal and the lengthy fracas which has followed.
- Apr. 21, Detroit Free Press (Wayne-Western Washtenaw edition) - Ypsilanti resident John Stahl, and sons Scott and John, had a photo and letter printed in the "Why I Love Where I Live" feature. Here's a brief quote: "Ypsilanti has everything one-could want in a big city, but it doesn't have the hustle and bustle ... The parks and playgrounds are perfect for afternoon outings with our boys. As they play on the swings and slides, my wife and I sit under a big shade tree, looking up at its greatness". Thanks a lot, John, for such a nice, appreciative letter - you beat several of us to the mailbox, & we're glad.
- Apr. 24, Detroit Free Press - article entitled "Resistance to historical district laws grows" refers to several cities in Michigan where preservation is under attack, including Ypsilanti.
- May 1, Detroit Free Press - editorial on the value of historic designation refers to Ypsilanti and the NBY proposal.
- May/June, Historic Preservation, the journal of the National Trust for Historic Preservation - lists the Historic East Side Association Walking Tours scheduled for May 8 and 14. Thanks, Sherry Tafini, for making Ypsilanti the only Michigan city to get that national attention!
- May 5, Detroit Free Press - a feature entitled "Remember When" focused on Ypsilanti's last great mansion which cries out for restoration, the Gilbert House. Interested buyers are urged to call the City Manager's office at 483-1100. (There must be an investor with imagination out there somewhere who sees that Ypsilanti is beginning to TURN AROUND. They may also note that the North Grove/Park Street area is beginning to rise from the neglect of earlier decades - note the route of the walking tours and the two houses in that neighborhood which will be on the Historic Home Tour this year.

All this in addition to a great deal of coverage in the Ypsilanti Press and the Ann Arbor News.





*Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation*

September 1983

# NEWSLETTER

- NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday, September 27 - 7:30 p.m.
- PLACE:** The Towner House Children's Museum  
303 North Huron (at Emmet)
- SPEAKER:** Judy White, Curriculum Director, Ypsilanti Public Schools, and Co-Chair of The Friends of the Towner House Children's Museum
- PROGRAM:** The Plan for the Towner House Children's Museum
- SPONSOR:** This program is funded by the Michigan Council for the Humanities as a part of a larger project to bring together parents, citizens, teachers, students and humanists to discuss the value and purpose of a history-based children's museum. The Heritage Foundation is pleased to serve as host to this MCH sponsored meeting.

Most Foundation members, especially those of long standing, have a particular affection for the Towner House. It was the cause for our coming into existence as an organization dedicated to preservation and preservation education in the Ypsilanti community. The threat of its demolition in 1974 launched a few far-sighted individuals into action; a lease on the building was arranged; repairs were made; and the building turned into one of the most charming residences around. That era ended, and another struggle to save the building - the oldest on its original foundation in the city - ensued. Now again the building is being revitalized: a new roof is on and a paint job is in progress. The building has been a significant part of the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival for two years now, with a multitude of events and activities taking place inside and around the beloved structure.

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This recent development is itself a fascinating story of community resolve and determination. Many people need to be thanked for what we see in progress there now, not the least of whom are the Edmunds (Bill and Nat) for steering others toward the idea of a children's museum. The Presbyterian Church (owners of the building) and its members deserve a note of thanks for their willingness to allow such a community project to take place on their property.

Nevertheless, the really vital force behind what many of us saw happening at the Towner House during Festival is, of course, Judy White, without whom the whole project would still be an idle dream. Let's hear it for JUDY WHITE: YPSILANTI'S WOMAN OF THE YEAR, 1983 !!!

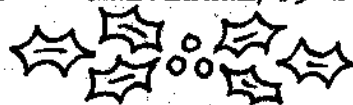
So - mark your calendar today! See you on the 27th, when Judy will talk about the museum project and the plans for renovations to the building and a program of activities for children there in the coming months and years. You are most welcome, even if you're only just curious about such a project, but beware - you may just get caught up in the excitement of a whole new program for young people in our community - a program designed to not only increase the opportunities for planned fun and cultural enrichment but also as a means of developing a sense of pride of place, a sense of community identity for all the young people here, a place at the heart of the city which they can call their own and be proud of. Wouldn't you like to be a volunteer in such a project? Come and join us for an excellent program and refreshments (Sandy Knight continues to serve as our refreshments chairperson - need we say more?)

(Note: What's that old saying? Behind every good woman there's a good man - something like that - anyway, it should be noted that behind Judy, there's Phil White, her husband, and those who worked to ready the Towner House for Festival know how much he contributed - reroofing, building shelves for the gift shop, scraping paint, and jobs ad infinitum, and all with a spirit of cheerful goodwill and enthusiasm for the task at hand.

#### The CHRISTMAS PARTY

Yes, it's time to start making arrangements, not only for winterizing your house (don't forget a furnace check), but also for the busy Christmas season. Don't forget that the Heritage Foundation holds a special party for paid-up members. This year's host and hostess are looking forward to a large crowd in their spacious, beautiful house. Call Mary Warner (482-8217) now if you're in doubt about your membership status, or send her your dues (510 Roosevelt).

\$15 Family/\$10 Individual/\$3 Senior Citizen





#### ADDITIONAL CHILDREN'S MUSEUM PROJECT PLANS UNDERWAY:

Jack Harris, who received a semester sabbatical leave from EMU to help plan the program for the Towner House Children's Museum and who has since received a grant from the Michigan Council for the Humanities to do a series of public discussions on the museum (see p. 1 of the Newsletter for the program which the Foundation will host on Sept. 27), reports that plans are well underway for later meetings and events. Members will soon be receiving more specific information about this important series.

It should be noted that the MCH grant paid for two significant aspects of the Children's Museum activities during Heritage Festival - the story teller and the Detroit Historical Museum's "Yesterday on Tour" group. Scheduled for the near future is the moving of EMU's Youth Art Program from Ford Hall on the campus to the Towner House. This is a Saturday art class for talented students. The first meeting at the museum will concentrate on the historic architecture of the area, with a tour, followed by work in the museum. The class is taught by Meg Lewandowski, art teacher in the Ypsilanti Public Schools, and runs for 8 consecutive Saturdays.

The September 27 Foundation meeting, when Judy White will give us an overview of the plans for the museum, is only one of several meetings planned for the fall. ANYONE INTERESTED IN THE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM AND WISHING TO VOLUNTEER THEIR SERVICES SHOULD ATTEND THIS MEETING. Volunteers are needed in all areas of the museum project: working with children on a regular basis, fund raising, maintenance, collecting and collections, special events, etc. Call Judy White's office (482-6610) or Jack Harris (485-2155).



The Foundation has again triumphed in its annual Home Tour - over 300 ticket holders had a rare opportunity to visit five particularly fascinating structures. Guides reported that visitors were pleased, perhaps even surprised, by the quality of the Tour, both in terms of organization and in the splendid selection of houses. New features were the ice cream social on the Gilbert House grounds, run by the Historic East Side Association, and the punch served under the spreading beech at Child and Family Service, presented gratis by the South Side Neighborhood Association with cooperation from McDonald's.

Why ticket sales were down this year from last year's figures remains a mystery. Was it the extreme heat? Was Festival attendance itself down? Or was it because of less news coverage? While the same type of publicity went out from the Foundation, we did not receive special attention or a photograph in the major papers in the area as we did last year. To our knowledge, only the Detroit Monitor published the photograph we sent out, and from this we received several calls for information. Anyone want to research this question and begin work on next year's publicity?

In any case, thanks to all those who made the Tour such a delightful, uplifting, and informative experience for the visitors who passed through the houses: the many hard-working and spirited tour guides, the ticket sellers, the businesses which contributed to the printing of the brochure, the florists whose arrangements graced the homes on Tour, and the home owners themselves who stoically faced the heat of August and opened their doors so generously during Festival. All Ypsilanti owes you thanks - and THANKS AGAIN !!

#### BUSINESS IS LOOKING UP IN YPSILANTI !

So many improvements to businesses have been made over the past summer months that only a partial list can be included here:

1. Aubrey's fabulous renovation of their Second Floor into a bar and restaurant ...
2. Bill Durant's renovation of his flower shop facade, a project carefully designed to capitalize on the integrity of the original architectural features of the building ...
3. Sioux Shelton's improvements to her building on South Huron across from City Hall where she has moved her Breakaway Travel Agency ...
4. Sidetrack's and Depot Exchange's color magic and other improvements ...
5. Rex and Sally Richie's giant paint project that was so fascinating during Festival - it really sings the blues on the front of what we now best know as the big Miller's Ice Cream building in Depot Town ...
6. All the smaller scale improvements that can't be mentioned in this brief report ... Thanks to all of you !! YPSILANTI IS LOOKING UP !!!

#### The BEAUTIFUL, NEW 1984 HISTORIC STRUCTURE ENGAGEMENT CALENDAR is out !!!

... and will be available at our next meeting, Tuesday, Sept. 27, and at businesses around town for \$3, a truly unbeatable bargain. These handsome calendars, illustrated by 12 local artists, make wonderful Christmas gifts.

The Board has proposed that each member purchase no less than three calendars to keep, give away, or re-sell. Good idea? Proceeds from calendar sales help fund all Foundation projects - historic structure markers, Newsletter, scholarship, etc.

#### The OLD HOUSE

They who love an old house  
Will never love in vain,  
For how can any old house,  
Used to sun and rain,  
To lilac and to larkspur  
and arching trees above,  
Fail to give its answer  
To hearts that give it love.

(Thanks to Lynn Tabor;  
author unknown)



## FLOWERS, FLOWERS EVERYWHERE !!!

WELL, almost everywhere ! You would have to be pretty oblivious to your environment not to have noticed the wonderful improvement in the appearance of downtown Ypsilanti made by the planting of bright blooms in the planters and the care obviously lavished on so many of them. We have Bill Durant to thank for the organization and success of this project. Bill was one of that handful of Ypsilanti businesspeople who visited Northville last year, where flower plantings are an integral part of the downtown scene. Northville's floral displays represent a larger community commitment, and we would do well to study their organizational structure. Meanwhile, keep up the good work, Bill and all those who planted and watered planters during those hot summer weeks!

Speaking of flowers, you can't have missed the lush plantings in the window boxes at the Public Library. Jack Harris once showed slides of English gardens to the local Garden Club, among which was one of window-boxes on classical windowsills much like those on our beautiful library: "Why can't we have this here?", he asked. No sooner said than done - thanks to the late Jeanne Jordan. Window boxes did appear, first on the front, and later along the west side. Who knows, maybe they'll crop up on the east side facing the park and fountain. Several workers are to be thanked for this year's success - Fanny Lazarski, Barbara Hale, and most of all, Hugh Speer, who watered and fed the plants faithfully throughout the summer. AND IT SHOWS! Look again at that wonderful sight - before the first frost!

GOODMAN ON BALLOT - Former Ypsilanti Mayor George Goodman is one of eight nominees for member of the Board of Trustees of the Historical Society of Michigan. Six will be chosen. The annual meeting of the Society will be held in Alpena, Sept. 29 - Oct. 1.

### NEXT BOARD MEETING:

Wednesday, Oct. 4

7:30 p.m.

Van Bolt's

## SPECIAL WINDOW DISPLAYS - Look while they last !!

This is a PLEA: Don't miss at least three of the special window displays which have graced downtown and Depot Town during and since Festival:

First - the winner of the CBC contest, the superb exhibit of antique fans in the window at 210 W. Michigan (next to the adult book store), the work of the folks at Full Circle Community Center.

Second - the Heritage Foundation's display adjacent to the library park and fountain. Thanks to the efforts and imagination of Lis Knibbe and funding provided by the Foundation, this downtown revitalization display is the work of a U of M senior architecture student. The objective is to inform and inspire downtown business people regarding facade improvements. Take a few minutes to study this Foundation project and pass the word along about its location.

Third - Jane Bird's monumental two-panel display on the history of the Cross Street Bridge, past, present and future, in the windows adjacent to the Old Town restaurant. Rumor has it that she will soon dismantle this meticulous, once-in-a-lifetime project. Can anyone come up with a place for permanent display or safe storage? This is an important historical document which should be saved for future generations, as appreciation for our history grows.





## *Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation*

November 1983

# NEWSLETTER

**NEXT MEETING:** Wednesday, November 16 - 7:30 p.m.

**PLACE:** Ypsilanti Historical Museum  
220 North Huron

**SPEAKERS:** Dr. John Wright, Director of Education  
The Edison Institute (Greenfield  
Village and Henry Ford Museum)  
Ms. Rochelle Balkam, Ypsilanti High School  
Mr. Jerry Fouchey, Ypsilanti Public Schools

**PROGRAM:** The Towner House Children's Museum and Ypsilanti's  
Commitment to Teaching Local History in the  
Schools

**SPONSOR:** This program is funded by the Michigan Council for  
the Humanities as a part of a larger project to  
bring together parents, citizens, teachers,  
students and humanists to discuss the value and  
purpose of a history-based children's museum.  
The Ypsilanti Historical Museum has graciously  
allowed us to meet at the Museum for this spe-  
cial occasion. The Heritage Foundation will  
serve refreshments. Reminder to Heritage Foun-  
dation members: this is our annual meeting and  
there will be election of Board members.

Please note  
day of week  
and place !

Dr. Wright, resident of Ypsilanti and Director of Education at the Edison Institute, is himself at work on an enormous MCH sponsored program - a summer Chautauqua at Greenfield Village, 1984. This will be a re-creation of the famous summer camp and tent events which took place all over America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. They were seen as being culturally and recreationally uplifting, and people attended them for fun as well as for edification. Dr. Wright is a specialist in 'material culture', which in simple terms means the physical world we live in - architecture, artifacts, everything that physically identifies us as a civilization. Local history is dependent upon 'material culture' - witness the superb Historical Museum in which we will meet - a shining

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example of how 'things' can help us understand not only the past, but ourselves as well, and give us a greater sense of identity, a feeling for who we are and where we've come from. Dr. Wright's brief but important share in this program will give us a background for the two others on the program:- Jerry Fouchey, who was Project Facilitator for the now well established Ypsilanti Community History Project, will bring us up to date on what's happening in the Ypsilanti Public Schools in terms of local history - and Ms. 'Ricky' Balkam, who teaches local history at Ypsilanti High School, will demonstrate for us some of the exciting aspects of her class.

This is a chance to learn about and SHOW YOUR SUPPORT for the  
GOOD THINGS THAT ARE HAPPENING IN OUR SCHOOLS! Be there !!

#### NEWS from YHF BOARD:

At its October meeting, the Board voted to donate \$1,800 to the Friends of the Towner House Children's Museum to aid in the installation of a much-needed new heating system in the building. Installation should be complete by the time you have this Newsletter and at least half the cost will have been borne by the Heritage Foundation. In keeping with our long-term commitment to the Towner House (it was the catalyst for our coming into being) and our educational goals (& the Children's Museum certainly fits in that category), the Board felt it most appropriate to offer this major gift and our continued support. We urge all members to consider lending their personal support to this new project in the Towner House.

DUES are due !!!

#### CHRISTINE BLINN OPENS DOLL SHOP

Those of you who missed Chris' Open House on Nov. 1 and as yet haven't seen her charming shop on Michigan Avenue, are urged to stop by and see how she has transformed a small space for her 'little people'. Most of us who have been on Home Tours in the past recall our visit to the Blinn's delightfully restored house on the East Side. Now Chris has done it for downtown & though the space is small, it's a giant step in moving that troubled part of Ypsilanti towards a new vitality. Nestled wisely between Haab's and Materials Unlimited, with weekday hours (except Monday) of 10 am - 4 pm, and Saturday of 5 pm - 9 pm, her pretty shop offers all of us, as well as serious doll collectors, a new place to be proud of in downtown Ypsilanti. Thanks for doing it, Christine!

#### HOME TOUR SUGGESTIONS WELCOME !!

Those of you who have attended our annual Historic Home Tours best know the kinds and quality of homes (and business structures) we need for next year's home tour. It's not too early to start thinking - if you have specific suggestions, call Jack Harris, 485-2155.

UP-DATE ON WELCH HALL: One year ago at this time the Newsletter appealed to readers to write or call President Porter, call a regent, or write the local papers - Welch Hall was being threatened. The heat was off, workmen were dismantling much of the interior, and a large hole had been knocked through an outside wall, ostensibly to remove equipment.

Although there have been discussions with the Regents, and a committee of students, faculty, administrators and a community resident has met many times, Welch is still threatened, as are the University's other historic structures.

Some hope may be drawn from a move by the Michigan History Division to consider Welch, Starkweather, Sherzer, McKenny and Pease Halls, as part of an EMU Historic District, for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination will be considered by the Michigan Historic Preservation Review Board on December 6, 1983, at 10:00 am in Room 124 at 208 North Capitol Ave., Lansing 48918.

If the owner (EMU) objects to the listing of the property, that objection must be submitted to the Review Board. OTHERS INTERESTED IN COMMENTING ON THE NOMINATION should do so before the December 6 meeting date. This is a chance for Heritage Foundation members to express themselves on this vitally important issue! Eastern has only a small but precious legacy of

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its proud history as the oldest teacher training institution west of the Alleghenies. Welch Hall, whose facade still bears a stone plaque reading Normal Training School, 1896, was dedicated the same year as Starkweather Hall and is thus the only other EMU building to come down to us from the 19th century.

If you think Welch, Starkweather, Sherzer, Pease and McKenny Halls should be placed on the National Register of Historic Places, send your statement of support to:

Dr. Martha Bigelow, Director  
Michigan History Division  
Michigan Department of State  
208 North Capitol Avenue  
Lansing, Mi. 48918



Coming Soon!

Annual Foundation CHRISTMAS PARTY!

All dues-paid members are cordially invited to the annual Christmas party. If you haven't paid your dues for this year, please send your check now to Jane Bird, acting secretary, at 1302 Collegewood. If you have not received an invitation by December 3, call Jack Harris at 485-2155. Of course, we need your membership, but we also want to share the festivities with you!



LAST REMINDER!

The NEW, BEAUTIFUL 1984 HISTORIC STRUCTURE CALENDAR is available still only \$3, an excellent Christmas gift, and a darned good way to support the Foundation. It makes an easy and often cherished gift for children's teachers, neighbors now moved away, a faithful mailman, a special friend - at a bargain price. Available at the Nov. 16 meeting, or call Jane Van Bolt at 483-6972 or Jane Bird at 482-8989.

SHOP FOR CHRISTMAS IN YPSILANTI - FIRST!

NEXT BOARD MEETING:

Wednesday, December 7

7:30 p.m.

Bill Fennel's

202 South Huron

BAD NEWS - GOOD NEWS!

The bad news is that our indomitable Secretary-Treasurer, Mary Warner, has been hospitalized for an operation. The good news is that two days after the operation she was sitting up entertaining the staff at Beyer Hospital. Keep it up, Mary - we hope you'll be back soon! We NEED you!

TOWNER HOUSE CONFERENCE A SUCCESS!

The October 22, one-day conference which featured sessions devoted to oral history, children's literature, art, artifacts as educational tools, architecture, and drama, was an unqualified success. Thanks to such dedicated volunteers as Sandy Knight, Fanny Lazarski, Doris Milliman, Kathryn and Laverne Howard, and Phil White the Saturday conference, sponsored by the Michigan Council for the Humanities, was a memorable day for the 40+ in attendance.

